

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A PROPOSED AMENDMENT
TO THE GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND
FAMILY THERAPISTS
CHAPTER 135-6, RULE 135-6-03 *BIENNIAL RENEWAL CYCLE. AMENDED,*
AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the authority set forth below, the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists (hereinafter "Board") proposes an amendment to the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, Chapter 135-6 Regulation of Licenses, Rule 135-6-.03 *Biennial Renewal Cycle*. Amended, (hereinafter "proposed rule amendment").

This notice, together with an exact copy of the proposed rule amendments and a synopsis of the proposed rule amendment, is being mailed to all persons who have requested, in writing, that they be placed on a mailing list. A copy of this notice, an exact copy of the proposed rule amendments, and a synopsis of the proposed rule amendment may be reviewed during normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except official State holidays, at the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. These documents will also be available for review on the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists office website at www.sos.state.ga.us/plb/counselors or by contacting the Board office at 478-207-2440.

A public hearing is scheduled to begin at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, May 7, 2010, in the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217 to provide the public an opportunity to comment upon and provide input into the proposed rule amendment.

At the public hearing anyone may present data, make a statement, comment or offer a viewpoint or argument whether orally or in writing. Lengthy statements or statements of a considerable technical or economic nature, as well as previously recorded messages, must be submitted for the official record. Oral statements should be concise and will be limited to five (5) minutes per person. Written comments are welcomed. Such written comments must be legible and signed, should contain contact information from the maker (address, telephone number and/or facsimile number, etc.) and be actually received in the office prior to the close of business (5:00 p.m. EDT) on Friday, April 30, 2010. Written comments should be addressed to Randall D. Vaughn, Division Director, Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. Fax (866) 888-7127.

The Board will consider the proposed rule amendment for adoption at its meeting scheduled to begin at 1:40 p.m., Friday May 7, 2010 at the Georgia Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217.

According to the Department of Law, State of Georgia, the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists has the authority to adopt proposed rule amendments 135-6-.03 pursuant to authority contained in O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-4, 43-1-7, 43-1-19, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-14, 43-10A-15, 43-10A-16 and 43-10A-17.

At its meeting Friday, March 5, 2010, the Board voted that the formulation and adoption of this rule does not impose excessive regulatory cost on any licensee and any cost to comply with the proposed rule cannot be reduced by a less expensive alternative that fully accomplishes the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-4, 43-1-7, 43-1-19, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-14, 43-10A-15, 43-10A-16 and 43-10A-17.

Additionally, at its meeting Friday, March 5, 2010, the Board voted that it is not legal or feasible to meet the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-4, 43-1-7, 43-1-19, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-14, 43-10A-15, 43-10A-16 and 43-10A-17 to adopt or implement differing actions for businesses as listed in O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4(3)(A), (B), (C), and (D). The formulation and adoption of these rules will impact every licensee in the same manner and each licensee is independently licensed in the field of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists.

For further information, contact the Board office at (478) 207-2440.

This notice is given in compliance with Section 4(a)(1) of the Georgia Administrative Procedures Act (O.C.G.A. §50-13-4).

This 11th day of March, 2010.

Randall D. Vaughn
Director
Professional Licensing Boards

Posted: March 11, 2010

**SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE GEORGIA COMPOSITE
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS, AND
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS RULE FOR
RULE 135-6-.03, *BIENNIAL RENEWAL CYCLE. AMENDED***

Purpose: The purpose of this rule is to change the time frame and the requirements for completion of the biennial renewal cycle.

Main Features: The rule provides further clarification of the time frame and the requirements for completion of the biennial renewal cycle.

**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE EXISTING RULE AND THE PROPOSED
AMENDMENTS TO THE GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND
FAMILY THERAPISTS RULE FOR RULE 135-6-.03, *BIENNIAL RENEWAL
CYCLE. AMENDED.***

[Note: underlined text is proposed to be added; lined-through text is proposed to be deleted.]

135-6-.03 Biennial Renewal Cycle. Amended.

- (1) All licenses shall expire on September 30 of even numbered years.
- (2) Renewal notices are only sent as an accommodation. The responsibility of license renewal remains with the license holder.
- (3) The applicant for renewal shall submit to the Board, on or before ~~June 30~~ September 30 of even numbered years:
 - (a) A completed application for renewal; and
 - (b) The biennial renewal fee (See Fee Schedule); and
 - (c) Evidence-Certification of having satisfied the continuing education requirement, as set forth in Rule 135-9-.01, during the preceding two year period, beginning July 1 and ending June 30 October 1 of even numbered years.
- (4) Applications for renewal of licenses submitted between ~~July 1 and September 30~~ October 1 of the renewal year and December 31 of same even numbered years will be considered late and will be required to pay a late renewal penalty fee (See Fee Schedule). Failure to renew a license by the end of the established late renewal penalty period, which is December 31 of the renewal year, shall have the same effect as a revocation and reinstatement of the revoked license shall be in the discretion of the Board.
- (5) Unless the license is renewed on or before September 30 of even numbered years, continued practice after such date shall constitute unlawful practice and is grounds for discipline.

~~(6) If an application for renewal is submitted to the Board within 3 months of expiration of the license, the licensee must pay a penalty fee as assessed by the Board (See Fee Schedule). Failure to renew a license by the end of the established penalty period, which is December 31 of the renewal year, shall have the same effect as a revocation and reinstatement of the revoked license shall be in the discretion of the Board.~~

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-4, 43-1-7, 43-1-19, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-14, 43-10A-15, 43-10A-16 and 43-10A-17